

# PHILADELPHIA MULTIFAMILY HOUSING HUB NEWS



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### Combating a Drug Problem

Drug trafficking adversely affects many neighborhoods. One determined group of Philadelphia residents succeeded in getting a number of drug houses in their area closed down. Here is how they did it:



1. They were well-organized. Their neighborhood association was under an able leader who shared their neighbors' deep concern about their community's drug problem. Members provided their leader with facts on local drug activity as it was quietly observed.

2. They were discrete in their efforts. Telephone calls were made only to people in the community known to be trustworthy. That same group was invited to the meetings with the police on combating drug abuse.

3. They worked closely with the police captain of their district, their Community Relations Officer, and the head of the Narcotics Squad in the District Attorney's Office. Several meetings were held with these top security officers present.

4. The information collected on local drug abuse was put in a carefully written record for the police captain, with a copy of the list for the head of the Narcotics Squad. One resident, in particular, was given the task of being the look-out person. Information gathered by this resident included exact descriptions of people and cars that came and went, along with the time of day or night.

5. The neighbors persisted, day after day, until their goal had been reached. They called the Dept. of Licenses and Inspections to complain about the drug house properties. Legal violations such as broken windows or holes in the walls (for getting money) were reported, or anything that was a threat or hazard to the community.

6. When there was a hearing, a sizable group of neighbors (15) went to court. They were accompanied by one of their local political representatives.

7. After the houses were raided by the police and the Narcotics Squad, and tightly boarded-up, local residents continued to keep watch— ready to alert the police if there was any further trouble.

The key to this group's success was the willingness of the neighbors to organize and become the eyes and ears of their neighborhood. Projects facing similar problems should assist their tenants in organizing a town watch group and linking them with local enforcement and drug prevention programs.

### Welcome! New Regional Director

Guy Ciarrocchi, Esq. is Region III's new Regional Director. He joins HUD after serving as the Republican National Committee's Regional Political Director for the Mid-Atlantic region. During 2004, he was Executive Director of Bush-Cheney '04, Inc. overseeing the President's re-election campaign in PA. From 1996 until the start of 2004, he served as the Director of Public Affairs for the R.C. Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Prior positions held were Chief-of-Staff and Counsel to then-State Senator (now Congresswoman) Melissa Hart. He was appointed as a Deputy Attorney General for PA after graduating from Villanova Law School.

## Happy 4th of July!



### **Affordable Communities Initiative**

Thirteen years ago, the Advisory Commission on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing submitted its report, "Not In My Back Yard: Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing (the 1991 Report). Its basic finding remains true today- exclusionary, discriminatory, or unnecessary regulations constitute formidable barriers to affordable housing. Understanding that government should help, not hinder, the creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing, then-Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel Martinez stated that regulatory barriers to affordable housing must become an issue of national concern and action.



To focus on this issue, a department-wide effort was undertaken- America's Affordable Communities Initiative: Bringing Homes Within Reach Through Regulatory Reform (the Initiative). The Initiative seeks to help state and local governments identify regulatory barriers to affordable housing. It also assists community and interest groups and the general public in understanding that well-designed, attractive affordable housing can be an economic and social asset to a community.

The initiative has made reducing regulatory barriers to affordable housing a top departmental priority, receiving high-level attention on a daily basis. HUD hopes that this effort will change the outdated thinking of citizens and public officials from "not in my back yard" to "why not in our community?"

To view the full 31-page report, look at the following website: [www.huduser.org/publications/affhsg/whynotour-Comm.html](http://www.huduser.org/publications/affhsg/whynotour-Comm.html).

### **High-Tech Section 811 Project**

Allentown Supportive Housing, an 18-unit, Section 811 housing project, is a showcase of how modern technology can make apartments livable for the disabled.



In order to remove barriers for the disabled, each of the project's 540-780 sq. ft. units contain an environmental control unit (ECU) that uses infrared signals to operate many devices in the apartment. Residents can choose which functions to use depending on their preference and level of disability. The ECU-

controlled functions are activated by voice or a button on places like wheelchair armrests and a bed.

Among the functions controlled by the ECU are: air conditioning and heating, televisions, telephones, personal computers, water taps, ovens, doors, lights, and windows/blinds.

In addition, some units also have an overhead motorized chair lift system, with push-button controls, to transport severely disabled tenants from the bedroom to the bathroom. Complimenting these high-tech features are the following conventional accessibility modifications: color-coded hallways, height-adjustable sinks and countertops, lowered knobs on closets/cabinets, front-loaded washer/dryer, sliding interior doors, automatic flush toilets, tilting bathroom mirrors, infrared door entrance sensor, etc.

The sponsor, which spent \$2.1 million in assistive technologies, tried to find the appropriate level of technology for the greatest range of residents.

In a New York Times article, dated April 5, 2005, Sally Gammon, Chief Executive of the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, cited a study that stated over the first year, residents in the project required 61% less public financing to live- about \$26,000 per year compared with \$67,000 for people who were qualified to move into the apartments but did not.

Allentown Supportive Housing serves as a shining example that alternatives exist to nursing homes for people who are disabled but crave a measure of self-determination.

### **PHFA/PennDel AHMA Conference**



PHFA and the PennDel AHMA are sponsoring a housing management conference, on October 6-7, 2005, at the Willow Valley Resort and Conference Center in Lancaster, PA.

A total of 9 workshops will be held.

Among the topics to be discussed will be: Fair Housing issues, contract admin., tax credits, preventative maintenance, energy conservation, Washington updates, tenant-landlord relations, and environmental risks. Be sure to set aside these dates. Registration and lodging are recognized as a HUD-approved project expenses.

Registration forms can be obtained from the PennDel-AHMA website at: [www.penndelahma.org](http://www.penndelahma.org).

### **“Pathways to Self Sufficiency”**

Atlantic City Townhouses, is a 175-unit high rise, owned and managed by the NHPF, a national non-profit organization committed to affordable housing. Each of the foundation's 37 properties provides Resident Services Coordinators and programs, called Operation Pathways, geared to helping residents move to economic independence.



At Atlantic Townhouses, “Pathways to Self-Sufficiency” provides referral services for senior citizens, including in-home aides, transportation, and emergency energy assistance. At NHPF's family-oriented properties, Pathways of Learning provides early childhood education support and resources, and Pathway to Academic Achievement concentrates on educational achievement and support for youth ages 13 to 18 years. Pathway to Employment focuses on training, services, and jobs for youth and adults.

“Senior citizens are interested in keeping busy, and some want to continue working,” says Resident Services Coordinator Michelle Fields. Thanks to the Center's many partnerships and activities, residents are working and volunteering in the community. The following are some of the Center's most active programs:

*\*Senior Employment:* Through a partnership with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Atlantic Townhouse residents can earn a small stipend of \$100 per month by assisting more frail residents with simple tasks including grocery shopping or light housekeeping. This is a “win-win” situation- the more active seniors have access to onsite employment opportunities, and their assistance helps more frail residents live independently and avoid moving to nursing homes. The Center also works with Atlantic City Mayor Lorenzo Langford's office to find jobs for residents who want to work. Several residents are now working at nearby hotels and other business as coatroom checkers, housekeepers, and cashiers.

*\*Volunteering:* Several residents are volunteer “grannies” in the public schools who help classroom teachers and interact with the children. Residents can walk to the nearby elementary school and usually volunteer two or three times per week.

*\*Computers:* The Center holds computer demonstrations and “fun events” with refreshments throughout the year. This helps to eliminate anxiety many seniors have about using computers. To publicize the event, flyers and e-mails are sent out to the residents of Atlantic City Townhouses, as well as several nearby senior properties.

### **FNMA and Freddie Mac Mortgage Data**

HUD USER has released calendar year 2003 data on the number of single-family and multifamily mortgages purchased by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the two Government-Sponsored Enterprises, or GSEs, that constitute the secondary mortgage market for conventional, conforming loans). This data allow market researchers and academics to study the flow of credit and capital in American cities and communities, and to evaluate how GSE funds are being used for purchases of mortgages that benefit low, very-low, and moderate-income families and families living in areas traditionally under-served by the mortgage market.



Included in the data set is information on the income, race, and gender of borrowers for single-family home mortgages, as well as census tract location, loan-to-value (LTV) ratios, seasoning (the process of establishing a “track record” of performance - this generally refers to loans originated at least one year prior to GSE acquisition), purchase/refinancing, and affordability. For multifamily units, information on property and unit-class is included, as well as the size of the property and type of seller or servicer from which the GSE purchased the mortgage.

The single-family and multifamily data sets are each available in two formats: divided according to Census tract, or stripped of geographic information and grouped into one national data set. The single-family and multifamily data sets covering the entire nation are available for purchase on CD-ROM (ASCII format). To download or purchase data sets, visit [www.huduser.org/datasets/gse/gse2003.html](http://www.huduser.org/datasets/gse/gse2003.html).

### **Rental Housing Integrity Improve. Project Newsletter**

The Winter 2005 RHIP newsletter is now available at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/rhiip/mfhrhiip.cfm>.

### State College Housing Market

A comprehensive market analysis report on State College, PA is available from HUD's Policy Development and Research.



The report, dated December 2004, focuses on the State College Metropolitan Statistical Area (Centre County).

Among the facts cited in the report are:

\*The economy has grown steadily and is expected to remain stable during the forecast period (12/1/04-12/1/07).

\*The median family income is estimated at \$59,100.

\*The population is estimated at 146,250, with Penn State students accounting for more than 25%.

\*Two-thirds of university students live off campus and represent a major demand for privately-owned housing units.

\*As of the 1990 Census, the rental vacancy rate was 5.3%. This is indicative of a relatively balanced market for an area with a low-to-moderate rate of population growth.

\*Construction of multifamily units did not keep pace with Penn State's increased enrollment during the mid-to-late 1990s. However, the rental vacancy rate declined to 3.8%, as of 2000.

\*As of 12/1/04, the vacancy rate increase to 4.6% due to more renters becoming homeowners (because of low interest rates) and students relocating to larger units in the remainder of the Housing Market Area (HMA).

\*A demand of approximately 600 rental units is expected during the 3-year forecast period. A portion of this demand may be met by 300 units that are currently in planning. This level of construction will allow for a balanced market condition.

The complete market analysis can be downloaded from the following web site: [www.huduser.org/Publications/PDF/CMAR\\_StCollegePA.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/Publications/PDF/CMAR_StCollegePA.pdf).

### Blossoming Residential Housing Market



The downtown Pittsburgh, PA housing market is experiencing a boom in the conversion of former factory buildings into residential housing.

In April, a formal grand opening was held of Heinz Lofts, a \$70.2 million, 262-unit upscale apartment complex developed

by the Ferchill Group of Cleveland. The building, which is located on the north shore of the Allegheny River, was one of five former food processing plants.

Ferchill, which specializes in rehabilitating historic buildings, restored the building's facades and masonry features, rebuilt the original corner towers, and replaced the ironwork. Two of the remaining three buildings in the Heinz Lofts complex are now available for leasing. That will bring the total units to 267. The fifth structure, the Shipping Building, will house a 457-space garage. All five buildings will be connected by enclosed sky bridges.

Heinz Lofts is just one example of the exciting things that are happening in downtown Pittsburgh. Among the projects is a 151-unit luxury apartment building under construction in the Cultural District; and an 18-story condominium on Fort Pitt Blvd. In the planning stage are 60 condominium units for the National Bank Bldg.; a conversion of the former Nabisco Plant in the East Liberty Section of the city into 151 rental units; and a conversion of the Old Armstrong Cork Factory into a 297-unit apartment complex.

### Census Data



HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research has added a useful feature to its web site, "MapStats." By simply clicking on a state map, you can view a census profile on your state, county, city, congressional district, or federal judicial district. See: [www.fedstats.gov/qf/](http://www.fedstats.gov/qf/)

### Closings

The following closings occurred during the month of June: *In-sured-* PA: Fox Hill Towers; WV: Summerville Place, Wheeling Station, West View Manor; and *Section 202/811-* PA: Luther House III; DE: Luther Village I; and NJ: Community Hope VII Consumer Home, Pohatcong Consumer Home.



### MAP Clarification

The \$30 minimum threshold for a Section 222/223(f) project, that was cited in last month's June 2005 newsletter, referred to the inspection fee.